Case Study – Neil.

Neil has been volunteering since June 2021 and is retired.

"Before volunteering I wasn't really doing anything, I felt like I was vegetating. I met another volunteer in the pub and I thought, I like canals, I like boats, (I had previously gone on a canal holiday) so I'll give it a go. Robert was very helpful when I started, it was good weather so I decided to wear shorts and I just thoroughly enjoyed it."

"I was speaking to my doctor and he was surprised by the changes in my blood pressure and irregular heartbeat he asked me what I have been doing to cause these changes. I told him about how I've been volunteering as a Lockkeeper, we spend time outside cycling between the Locks it's a free gym!"

"Its good to get out and spend time with people, when we are working the locks we meet all kinds of people from all over the world, they are usually nice and interesting and 99% of the feedback we get from them is always good.

As we have added other volunteer roles, Neil has been active in other parts of the project. He secured a placement with Falkirk Council with us for 6 months of last year and helped to set up the @16 making and mending space. He has been trained in RYA Inland Helmsman to skipper the boat and Bike Mechanics and has been part of the bike repair volunteer group. He has also well as attended the crafts group and is helping to plan a future social group. He has taken part in PAT testing training and has taken the lead in helping to keep records of tools and materials in the workshop.

"Since the workshop, I've learnt new skills and more confident doing things I hadn't done before. I feel better in myself for it and have made a great group of friends, these people who I know will be there for me I need them"

Neil was also the star of the show of our 'Santa @ Lock 16' Christmas event and was an excellent Santa. "I always love being Santa, the look on the kids faces who believe."

Neil has recently become a voting member and then joined our board of trustees at our last AGM.